

Message Text

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67

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 BOOK-525 (ISO) W

----- 053933

R 282017Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1551

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CS, HO

SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRESIDENT ODUBER

1. PRESIDENT ODUBER OF COSTA RICA ARRIVED AT THE SAN PEDRO SULA AIRPORT AT APPORXIMATELY 9:15 A.M. ON OCTOBER 26. HE WAS MET BY CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR AND OTHER HONDURAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THEY TRAVELLED TO THE TOWN OF OMOA TO DEDICATE A SUBURB THAT HAD BEEN BUILT FOR THE HOMELESS FROM HURRICANE FIFI WITH COSTA RICAN MATERIALS AND FUNDS.

2. CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR AND OTHER OFFICIALS MADE SPEECHES LAUDING THE CONTRIBUTION OF COSTA RICA TO HONDURAS. IN HIS SPEECH, PRESIDENT ODUBER PRAISED HONDURAS AND EMPHASIZED COSTA RICAN RELATIONSHIP TO ITS CENTRAL AMERICAN NEIGHBORS.

3. SUBSEQUENTLY PRESIDENT ODUBER WAS TAKEN ON A TRIP THROUGHOUT THE AREA AND SHOWN THE FACILITIES OF THE PORT

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OF PUERTO CORTES. AFTERWARDS PRESIDENT ODUBER AND CHIEF OF

STATE MELGAR GAVE A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE IN SAN PEDRO SULA.
PRESIDENT ODUBER AND HIS PARTY DEPARTED AT 4:00 P.M.

4. THE MAJOR POINTS CONTAINED IN PRESIDENT ODUBER'S REPLIES
IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOW:

(A) STATED THAT IMPORTANCE MUST BE GIVEN TO THE ACTION OF
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN MAINTAINING PEACE AND
HARMONY IN THE AREA WITHOUT EXCLUDING A PERMANENT RELA-
TION BETWEEN THE CHIEFS OF STATE;

(B) REMARKED THAT THE MAJOR AGRARIAN PROBLEM IN COSTA RICA
IS THE DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF LAND RATHER THAN
THE ABSENCE OF AVAILABLE LAND;

(C) RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ABOUT ROBERT VESCO, HE STATED
THAT ANY FOREIGNER WHO OBEYS COSTA RICAN LAW CAN STAY
THERE, AND THE USG CAN EXTRADITE HIM ONLY IF IT COMPLIES
WITH THE APPROPRIATE LAWS;

(D) SAID THAT COSTA RICA SUPPORTS PANAMANIAN CLAIMS REGARDING
SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL RIGHTS;

(E) COMMENTED THAT COSTA RICA CONSIDERED BELIZE A CENTRAL
AMERICAN TERRITORY AND NO EXTRATERRITORIAL POWER HAD ANY
REASON FOR BEING IN AMERICAN TERRITORY; AND

(F) STATED COSTA RICA RECOGNIZED GUATEMALA'S CLAIMS BUT ALSO
RESPECTS THE SELF DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES AND THEREFORE
BELIEVES GUATEMALA, THE POPULATION OF BELIZE AND GREAT
BRITIAN SHOULD ACCELERATE THEIR NEGOTIATIONS.

5. THE MAJOR POINTS CONTAINED IN CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR'S RE-
PLIES FOLLOW:

(A) STATED THAT AN AGRARIAN REFORM COULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT
OVERNIGHT AND COMMENTED THAT THE AGRARIAN REFORM LAW IS
PROGRAMMED FOR A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD;

(B) CRITICIZED CAMPESINO LEADERS FOR FAILING TO ORIENT COR-
RECTLY THEIR FOLLOWS IN REGARD TO WHAT THE GOVERNMENT
IS ATTEMPTING TO DO IN CARRYING OUT AN AGRARIAN REFORM;

(C) REMARKED THAT THE HONDURAN ATTORNEY-GENERAL HAD NOT BEEN
ABLE TO PRESENT SUFFICIENT PROOF TO INDICT THOSE RESPON-
SIBLE FOR THE UNITED BRANDS SCANDAL;

(D) STATED THAT HONDURAS SUPPORTS PANAMANIAN ASPIRATIONS AND
THAT HE WOULD MAKE HIS POSITION ON BLEIZE KNOWN AT THE
CA PRESIDENTS MEETING;
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(E) OBSERVED THAT THE HONDURAS/WL SALVADOR ISSUE WOULD BE
CONSIDERED IN THE CA PRESIDENTS MEETING, BUT THAT THE GOH
IS STILL AWAITING A REPLY TO ITS TREATY PROPOSAL PRESENTED
TO THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN ON OCTOBER 2.

6. COMMENT: PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER CESAR BATRES TOLD POLOFF
ON OCTOBER 27 THAT GOH IS CONCERNED ABOUT GUATEMALAN INTENTIONS
REGARDING BELIZE. HE REMARKED THAT A WAR WOULD BE "MADNESS"

BUT SAID THAT WAS WHAT HE THOUGHT IN 1969 ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES
OF A CONFLICT WITH EL SALVADOR. HE SAID THAT THE GOH WOULD BE VERY
CAREFUL IN COMMITTING ITSELF TO ANY DELCARATION CONCERNING
BELIZE.
SANCHEZ

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